AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 21-38, and add new claims 41-44 as indicated below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1.-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method for simulating a communications network which includes a plurality of physical network devices performing a plurality of network functions through objects that model a respective set of network modules or devices, the method comprising the step of:

providing for each of the plurality of physical network devices a corresponding module or device of a plurality of modules or devices, the corresponding module or device simulating a behavior of the respective physical network device including simulating a communication of the respective physical network device with other physical network devices, wherein at least one physical network device of the plurality of physical network devices is simulated by a first implementation of a first module or device of the plurality of modules or devices, wherein the first module or device has a plurality of different implementations, the plurality of different implementations performing a same network function of the at least one physical network device, and each of the plurality of different implementations using a corresponding communication mechanism for communicating with other modules or devices of the plurality of modules or devices, the corresponding communication mechanism being defined by a number and types of communication functionalities utilized by the corresponding implementation and being different from communication mechanisms used by other implementations; and

providing, for the first module or device, inserting for every module or device of said set which has a plurality of different implementations at least one an~~respective~~ interfacing object through which the first module or device communicates with other modules or devices of the plurality of modules or devices ~~of said set;~~, said ~~respective~~ interfacing object having an external side and an internal side with respect to the first module or device, said external side ~~of said respective interfacing object being uniform for all modules or devices of said set~~ using a single communication mechanism for communicating with other modules and devices, the single communication mechanism being independent of the first implementation and the single communication mechanism being used by each of the plurality of modules or devices for communicating with other modules and devices, and said internal side ~~of said respective interfacing object~~ being ~~related to~~ configured to communicate with each of the plurality of different implementations of the first module or device ~~said modules or devices~~ through the corresponding communication mechanism.

22. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, wherein the plurality of physical network devices are simulated by the plurality of different implementations of the specific module or device, and wherein the method further comprises ~~comprising the steps of;~~ ~~realising, for a module or device of said set, a plurality of different implementations; and~~ providing a unique interfacing object for [[all]] the plurality of different implementations ~~of said plurality~~.

23. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, wherein a plurality of physical network devices are simulated by the plurality of different implementations of the specific module or device, and wherein the method further comprises ~~comprising the steps of:~~ ~~realising, for a module or device of said set, a plurality of different implementations; and~~

providing a respective interfacing object for every one of the plurality of different

implementation of said plurality of different implementations.

24. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, comprising the step of

configuring the external side of said interfacing object objects to allow communication among

the plurality of modules or devices of said set as events.

25. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, comprising the step of

configuring the external side of said interfacing object objects to allow [[the]] communication

among the plurality of modules or devices of said set as messages.

26. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, comprising the steps of:

providing a statistics managing module to collect statistic data pertaining to the operation

of said simulated network; and

measuring said statistic data through said statistics managing module through the external

side of said interfacing object objects associated with the modules or devices of said set.

27. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, wherein the external side

of said interfacing object exchanges objects exchange information with homologous objects

associated with the plurality of modules or devices of said set through structures comprising:

an indicator of the source module or device;

an indicator of the target module or device; and

the exchanged information.

28. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, wherein said interfacing object exchanges ~~objects exchange~~ information with homologous objects associated with the plurality of modules or devices ~~of said set~~ through structures comprising:

an indicator of the source module or device;

a time indicator;

an indicator of the target module or device; and

the exchanged information.

29. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 21, wherein said interface object comprises ~~objects comprise~~ functionalities selected from:

messages dispatching functionality,

events dispatching functionality,

messages receiving functionality, and

events receiving functionality.

30. (Currently Amended) A system comprising at least one computer for simulating a communications network which includes a plurality of physical network devices performing a plurality of network functions ~~through objects that model, using the at least one computer, a respective set of network modules or devices~~, the system comprising:

a plurality of modules or devices, each of the plurality of modules or devices corresponding to one of the plurality of physical network devices and simulating, using the at least one computer, a behavior of the respective physical network device including simulating a communication of the respective physical network device with other physical network devices, wherein at least one physical network device is simulated by a first implementation of a first module or device of the plurality of modules or devices, wherein the first module or device has a

plurality of different implementations, all of the plurality of different implementations

performing a same network function of the at least one physical network device, and each of the

plurality of different implementations using a corresponding communication mechanism for

communicating with other modules or devices of the plurality of modules or devices, the

corresponding communication mechanism being defined by a number and types of

communication functionalities utilized by the corresponding implementation and being different

from communication mechanisms used by other implementations of the plurality of

implementations; and

~~for every module or device of said set which has a plurality of different implementations,~~

~~at least one respective~~ an interfacing object for the first module or device, wherein through the

specific interfacing object the first module or device communicates with other modules or

devices of the plurality of modules or devices ~~of said set~~; said ~~respective~~ interfacing object

having an external side and an internal side with respect to the first module or device, said

external side ~~of said respective interfacing object being uniform for all modules or devices of~~

~~said set~~ using a single communication mechanism for communicating with other modules and

devices, the single communication mechanism being independent of the first implementation and

the single communication mechanism being used by each of the plurality of modules or devices

for communicating with other modules and devices, and said internal side ~~of said respective~~

~~interfacing object~~ being ~~related to~~ configured to communicate with each of the plurality of

different implementations of the first module or device ~~said modules or devices~~ through the

corresponding communication mechanism.

31. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 30, wherein the plurality of

physical network devices are simulated by the plurality of different implementations of the first

module or device, and wherein the system further comprises ~~comprising: for at least one module or device of said set, a plurality of different implementations;~~ a unique interfacing object for [[all]] the plurality of different implementations ~~of said plurality of different implementations~~.

32. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 30, wherein the plurality of physical network devices are simulated by the plurality of different implementations of the first module or device, and wherein the system further comprises ~~comprising: for at least one module or device of said set, a plurality of different implementations; and~~ a respective interfacing object for every one of the plurality of different implementation ~~of said plurality of different implementations~~.

33. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 30, wherein the external side of said interfacing object ~~objects~~ is configured for allowing [[the]] communication among the plurality of modules or devices ~~of said set~~ as events.

34. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 30, wherein the external side of said interfacing object ~~objects~~ is configured for allowing [[the]] communication among the plurality of modules or devices ~~of said set~~ as messages.

35. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 30, comprising a statistics managing module to collect statistic data pertaining to the operation of said simulated network, said statistics managing module being configured for measuring said statistic data through the external side of said interfacing object ~~objects associated with the modules or devices of said set~~.

36. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 30, wherein the external side of said interfacing object ~~objects~~ is configured for exchanging information with homologous

objects associated with the <u>plurality of</u> modules or devices ~~of said set~~ through structures

comprising:

an indicator of the source module or device;

an indicator of the target module or device; and

the exchanged information.

37. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 30, wherein the external side

of said interfacing <u>object</u> ~~objects~~ is configured for exchanging information with homologous

objects associated with the <u>plurality of</u> modules or devices ~~of said set~~ through structures

comprising:

an indicator of the source module or device;

a time indicator;

an indicator of the target module or device; and

the exchanged information.

38. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 30, wherein said <u>interfacing</u>

<u>object comprises</u> ~~interface objects comprise~~ functionalities selected from:

messages dispatching functionality,

events dispatching functionality,

messages receiving functionality, and

events receiving functionality.

39. (Previously Presented) An object of a system for simulating a telecommunications

network according to any one of claims 30 to 38, comprising the at least one computer and at

least one respective interfacing object having an external side and an internal side with respect to

the modelled module or device, said external side of said respective interfacing object having a character that is independent from idiosyncrasies of said module or device.

40. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium encoded with a computer program product loadable into a memory of at least one computer, the computer program product comprising portions of software code for performing the method according to any one of claims 21 to 29.

41. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the plurality of different implementations correspond to a plurality of different manufactured versions of the at least one physical network device.

42. (New) The method of claim 21, further comprising providing, for each of the plurality of modules or devices a corresponding interfacing object through which the corresponding module or device communicates with other modules or devices, each interfacing object having an external side and an internal side with respect to the corresponding module or device, for each interfacing object the external side using the single communication mechanism for communicating with other modules and devices, the single communication mechanism being independent of the corresponding module or device and being used by each of the plurality of modules or devices for communicating with other modules and devices, and the internal side being configured to communicate with each of the plurality of modules or devices.

43. (New) The system of claim 30, wherein the plurality of different implementations correspond to a plurality of different manufactured versions of the at least one physical network device.

44. (New) The system of claim 30, further comprising, for each of the plurality of modules or devices a corresponding interfacing object through which the corresponding module or device communicates with other modules or devices, each interfacing object having an external side and an internal side with respect to the corresponding module or device, for each interfacing object the external side using the single communication mechanism for communicating with other modules and devices, the single communication mechanism being independent of the corresponding module or device and being used by each of the plurality of modules or devices for communicating with other modules and devices, and the internal side being configured to communicate with each of the plurality of modules or devices.